

# POLS-314: COMPARATIVE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Fall 2020

Prof. Dr. Hernán Flom

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of this course is to analyze how politics affects the lives of citizens in cities and metropolitan areas of the developing world; in other words, how does politics resolve—or not—the main conflicts and tensions experienced by citizens in urban areas. We will focus on two conceptions of urban politics. The first is the urban domain as a physical agglomeration distinct from rural or suburban areas. In this sense, we will concentrate on various problems crosscut by urban inequality from segregation in land use and discriminatory provision of public utilities to different modes of political incorporation and intermediation.

The second conception of urban politics refers to local as opposed to national or state-level politics. In this regard, we will look at the pros and cons of decentralization, the coordination problems that emerge between different government tiers, and the specific dynamics of local governance; in other words, we will attempt to answer the question who has power in the city, how they exercise it, and what are the consequences of that power distribution. We will look at how governments make and implement policies, and how social mobilization can trigger, expedite, or confront these decisions.

Although we will rely mostly on political science studies, we will also incorporate readings from other disciplines, including urban studies, sociology and anthropology. The regional focus will be mostly on Latin America, although we will also look at urban politics in the United States and in other developing regions such as Africa and Asia (especially India and China).

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

Wednesday and Friday 11:55-1:35

Office hours: Wednesdays 3 – 5pm and by appointment. All office hours will be held remotely.

## **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

Each week I will send out a brief overview outlining that week's main themes and linking the topic to our previous sessions. I will post at least one short online lecture for you to view before discussion sessions and send out preparatory questions, guidelines or exercises.

You are expected to have done the readings, watched the online lecture and engaged with the discussion questions, both in the online forum and in our seminar sessions. Participation is an integral part of the course's assessment.

You are also required to produce a research paper to approve the course. The paper should study how federal, state and/or local government officials have dealt with or are attempting to tackle different aspects of urban inequality in Hartford or its surrounding metropolitan area. The paper may address themes not included in the syllabus; however, the student must address some of the theories and cases discussed in the course.

You are encouraged to collect primary data for their research. If social distancing guidelines are still in place, data collection can be limited to online resources (e.g. books, papers, government documents, official statistics, oral narratives, NGO reports, etc.). Some lectures might focus on methodological background to enable you to approach this research. You will have to present partial products of their research project during the semester.

### Grade distribution:

Class participation (20%)

Research paper (80%):

- Research question and plan (15%)
- Preliminary version: either an elaborated outline or an early draft (25%)
- Final version (40%)

### **Work outside class**

Students are expected to spend 11 to 13 hours per week working on this course outside the classroom.

### **Late policy**

Barring an extraordinary excuse, late written assignments will be marked down one third of a grade (e.g., A to A-) per day.

### **Grading Standards**

Grading Scale: A= 95-100%    A-= 90-94%    B+= 85-89%    B= 80-84%    B-= 75-79%  
C+= 70-74%    C= 65-69%    C-= 60-64%    D= 55-59%    D-= 50-54%    F= < 50%

<b>To get...</b>	
<b>A</b>	Exceptional work. Demonstrates superb understanding of the course material <i>and</i> outstanding critical thinking and analytic rigor. Goes beyond simply answering the prompt to craft a creative and insightful analysis. Communicates information in a clear and concise manner.
<b>B</b>	Good work. Demonstrates a strong grasp of course material and good analytic rigor, but with some errors (e.g. faulty assumptions in logic or some incorrect descriptions of an author's argument). Solid work, but not the most original or insightful analysis.
<b>C</b>	Mediocre work. Applies some course material and themes but demonstrates considerable misunderstanding of material. Difficult to discern the student's argument and the logic supporting this argument.
<b>D</b>	Poor work. May attempt to apply some course materials and themes but demonstrates very serious errors or misunderstanding of course material. The student doesn't appear to have any argument. Shows little effort.
<b>F</b>	Very poor work. Assignment fails to address the prompt and guidelines. Reflects a lack of effort.

### Academic integrity

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course, you are encouraged to consult with your classmates and to share sources. You should ensure, however, that any work you submit for evaluation is the result of your own research/writing and reflects your own approach to the topic. You also must cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. The College's guidelines on academic integrity and plagiarism are detailed in the "Intellectual Honesty" section of the Student Handbook available at <https://www.trincoll.edu/SiteCollectionDocuments/StudentHandbook.pdf>. You should familiarize yourselves with these principles and understand that those found in violation of the Trinity College Student Integrity Contract are subject to a range of penalties, including suspension or expulsion. The minimum penalty for plagiarism in this class is the failure of the course. Finally, if you have received any help with your writing (feedback, etc.), you must acknowledge this assistance in a footnote at the beginning of your assignment.

### Accommodations for students with disability

Trinity College is committed to creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have approval for academic accommodations, please notify me during the first two weeks of the semester or a minimum of 10 days prior to needing your accommodations. Please be sure to meet with me privately to discuss implementation.

If you do not have approved accommodations, but have a disability requiring academic accommodations, or have questions about applying, please contact Lori Clapis, Coordinator of Accessibility Resources at 860-297-4025 or at [Lori.Clapis@trincoll.edu](mailto:Lori.Clapis@trincoll.edu).

### **Virtual classroom etiquette**

In these challenging times, I am committed to offer you the best learning environment possible. However, this requires your collaboration too. Out of respect to your fellow students and me, please

- Be on time.
- Dress appropriately.
- Find an appropriate place to take the meeting. You should be sitting on a desk or table, not your bed.
- Make sure your background is professional and work appropriate (if this is not possible, you may use a virtual background).
- Always leave your video on.
- Avoid interruptions during the meeting.
- Make sure everyone can see you and hear you clearly when you are speaking.
- Mute your microphone when you are not talking.
- Leave your keyboard alone. Please, if you need to take notes during class discussions, do so on a notebook.
- Resist the urge to text or check your phone unless instructed to do so as part of the activity (students who do so will be marked absent).
- Don't eat during the meeting; drinking is allowed but please do so quietly.

**Finding me:** I will conduct office hours remotely and by appointment. I encourage you to come to office hours even if you don't have specific questions or concerns. Please, sign up for office hours here:

Also, feel free to email me with any questions, concerns, or feedback; I will try to return your email within 24 hours (business days).

### **Required readings**

All readings will be available in electronic form on the course Moodle site.

Thanks for your attention! Looking forward to a great semester ☺

## **COURSE OUTLINE.**

### **Week 1. Introduction. Urban politics, inequality and citizenship in the developing world (September 9 & 11)**

Post, Alison. 2018. "Cities and politics in the developing world". *Annual Review of Political Science*, 21: 115-33.

Auerbach, Adam M., Adrienne LeBas, Alison E. Post, and Rebecca Weitz-Shapiro. "State, society, and informality in cities of the global south." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 53, no. 3 (2018): 261-280.

Finkel, Eugene, Adria Lawrence and Andrew Mertha (eds.). 2019. "Cities and Urban Politics." Newsletter of the Organized Section in Comparative Politics of the American Political Science Association, 30(1), pp. 2-6.

### **Week 2. Urbanization: Modernist City Planning and Democracy (September 16 & 18)**

Scott, James C. *Seeing like a state: how certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. Yale Agrarian Studies Series, 1998. Chapters 2 (pp. 53-64, 76-83) and 4 (pp. 103-130).

Perlman, Janice. *Favela: Four decades of living on the edge in Rio de Janeiro*. Oxford University Press, 2010. Introduction (recommended), Chapters 1 (pp. 24-40) and 2 (pp. 41-61).

Goldman, Michael. "Speculative urbanism and the making of the next world city." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35, no. 3 (2011): 555-581.

Roy, Ananya. "Why India cannot plan its cities: Informality, insurgence and the idiom of urbanization." *Planning theory* 8, no. 1 (2009): 76-87.

### **First assignment (research question and plan) due**

### **Weeks 3 & 4. Urban inequality and segregation (September 23, 25 & 30, October 2)**

Holston, James. *Insurgent citizenship*. Princeton University Press, 2008. Chapter 5.

Rothstein, Richard. *The color of law*. Chapters 2, 3 and 4.

Hsing, Y.T. *The great urban transformation: the politics of land and property in China*. New York: Oxford University Press. Chapter 1.

Holland, A. *Forbearance as redistribution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Chapter 3.

**Weeks 5 & 6. Public and semi-public goods provision: environmental goods, infrastructure and public utilities (October 7, 9, 14 & 16)**

Herrera, Veronica. "The case for studying urban environmental politics in the developing world." In Finkel, Eugene, Adria Lawrence and Andrew Mertha (eds.). 2019. "Cities and Urban Politics." Newsletter of the Organized Section in Comparative Politics of the American Political Science Association, 30(1), pp. 43-49.

Auyero, Javier, and Débora Alejandra Swistun. *Flammable: Environmental suffering in an Argentine shantytown*. Oxford University Press, 2009.

Herrera, Veronica, and Alison E. Post. "Can developing countries both decentralize and depoliticize urban water services? Evaluating the legacy of the 1990s reform wave." *World Development* 64 (2014): 621-641.

Bril-Mascarenhas, Tomás, and Alison E. Post. "Policy Traps: consumer subsidies in post-crisis Argentina." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 50, no. 1 (2015): 98-120.

"A Crisis Right Now: Manila and San Francisco Face Rising Seas." New York Times, February 13, 2020.

**Second draft of paper is due**

**Week 7. Public safety and enforcement of the rule of law (October 21 and 23)**

Moncada, Eduardo. *Cities, business and the politics of urban violence in Latin America*. Stanford University Press, 2016. Chapter 1 ("Rethinking the politics of urban violence").

LeBas, Adrienne. "Violence and urban order in Nairobi, Kenya and Lagos, Nigeria." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 48, no. 3 (2013): 240-262.

Sampson, Robert. *The Great American City: Chicago and the enduring neighborhood effect*. University of Chicago Press, 2012. Chapters 6 & 7.

Auyero, Javier, Agustín Burbano de Lara, and María Fernanda Berti. "Violence and the State at the Urban Margins." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 43, no. 1 (2014): 94-116.

**Week 8. Urban politics in democracies (October 28 and 30)**

Dahl, Robert A. *Who governs? Democracy and power in an American city*. Yale University Press, 2005. Chapters 1, 7, 8, 12 & 24.

Goldfrank, Benjamin, and Andrew Schrank. "Municipal neoliberalism and municipal socialism: urban political economy in Latin America." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33, no. 2 (2009): 443-462.

Tausanovitch, Chris, and Christopher Warshaw. "Representation in municipal government." *American Political Science Review* 108, no. 3 (2014): 605-641.

Holston, James. *Insurgent citizenship*. Princeton University Press, 2008. Chapter 7 (Urban Citizens).

**Weeks 9 & 10. Political intermediation and participation: clientelism and grassroots mobilization (November 4, 6, 11 & 13)**

Auyero, Javier. *Poor people's politics: Peronist survival networks and the legacy of Evita*. Duke University Press, 2001. Chapter 3.

Auerbach, Adam Michael. "Clients and communities: The political economy of party network organization and development in India's urban slums." *World Politics* 68, no. 1 (2016): 111-148

Auerbach, Adam Michael, and Tariq Thachil. "How Clients Select Brokers: Competition and Choice in India's Slums." *American Political Science Review* 112, no. 4 (2018): 775-791.

Holland, Alisha C., and Brian Palmer-Rubin. "Beyond the machine: clientelist brokers and interest organizations in Latin America." *Comparative Political Studies* 48, no. 9 (2015): 1186-1223.

Pasotti, Eleonora. *Political branding in cities: The decline of machine politics in Bogotá, Naples, and Chicago*. Cambridge University Press, 2010. Chapters 1 and 5.

Kumar, Tanu. "Subsidizing homeownership builds wealth, changes attitudes, and generates urban civic participation," in Finkel, Eugene, Adria Lawrence and Andrew Mertha (eds.). 2019. "Cities and Urban Politics." Newsletter of the Organized Section in Comparative Politics of the American Political Science Association, 30(1), pp. 23-32.

**Final version of paper is due**